



## Baking with Fresh Pumpkin

*Big pumpkins, small pumpkins, white pumpkins, Cinderella pumpkins: what's best for baking?*

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### Smaller is Better

Choose sugar pie pumpkins or other flavorful varieties. Small and sweet, with dark orange-colored flesh, they're perfect for pies, soups, muffins and breads.

A medium-sized (4-pound) sugar pumpkin should yield around 1½ cups of mashed pumpkin. This puree can be used in all your recipes calling for canned pumpkin. Field pumpkins, which are bred for perfect jack-o-lanterns, tend to be too large and stringy for baking.

There are three ways to transform an uncooked pumpkin into the puree used in baking:

### Baking Method

- Cut the pumpkin in half and discard the stem section and stringy pulp. Save the seeds to dry and roast.
- In a shallow baking dish, place the two halves face down and cover with foil.
- Bake in a preheated 375° F oven for about 1½ hours for a medium-sized sugar pumpkin, or until tender.
- Once the baked pumpkin has cooled, scoop out the flesh and puree or mash it.
- For silky smooth custards or soups, press the pumpkin puree through a sieve.

### Boiling Method

- Cut the pumpkin in half, discarding the stringy insides.
- Peel the pumpkin and cut it into chunks.
- Place in a saucepan and cover with water.
- Bring to a boil and cook until the pumpkin chunks are tender.
- Let the chunks cool, and then puree the flesh in a food processor or mash it with a potato masher or food mill.

### Microwave Method

- Cut the pumpkin in half, discarding the stringy insides.
- Microwave on high power for seven minutes per pound, turning pieces every few minutes to promote even cooking. Process as above.
- You can refrigerate your fresh pumpkin puree for up to three days, or store it in the freezer up to six months, enabling you to enjoy fall pumpkins for months to come.

